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Monday, July 16, 2007

[CDFA Home](#)[Doing Business with CDFA](#)[Site Map](#)[Sec. A. G. Kawamura's Biography](#)[Press Releases](#)[Regulations](#)[Rate Our Web Site](#)[Contact Us](#)CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF
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A.G. on Ag
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A.G. on Ag - California Agriculture Updates - April 30, 2007

[► Archive 2006 Newsletters](#)

(L-R) Drew McDonald, Taylor Farms; Bryan Silbermann, Produce Marketing Association; A.G. Kawamura, CDFA; and Bennie Osborn, Dean, UC Davis. (Photo courtesy of Produce Marketing Association)

On April 11th, I met with representatives of UC Davis and the university's Western Institute for Food Safety and Security ([WIFSS](#)), the president of the Produce Marketing Association ([PMA](#)) and other farming leaders to announce a major research funding commitment that will help create a new Center for Produce Safety at UC Davis.

The Produce Marketing Association demonstrated vision and commitment by contributing \$2 million to establish the Center. [Taylor Farms](#) of Salinas, California, was an individual contributor of \$2 million cash. Taylor Farms has also pledged to contribute \$1 million in research already planned by the company. These donations will be augmented by \$200,000 in-kind and cash contributions from the Western Growers Association ([WGA](#)), \$500,000 from the California Department of Food and Agriculture and \$150,000 from the [Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources](#), the outreach arm of the University of California. Governor Schwarzenegger has sent a [letter of commendation](#) applauding our efforts.

The Center for produce Safety will put together an aggressive research, training and outreach agenda that focuses on how and when food-borne illnesses arise in produce, and the actions that can be taken to reduce these risks. The industry's actions will help restore consumer confidence and demonstrate that the health and safety of consumers is their ultimate priority.



Secretary Kawamura speaks at a press conference on the [U.S. Farm Bill](#) with (L-R) Congressman Sam Farr (Monterey) and House Agriculture Committee Chair, Collin Peterson (Minnesota). Congressman Peterson was on a week tour of California learning about the California perspective on Farm Bill programs. Congressman Farr, Chairman Peterson and Secretary Kawamura had a morning breakfast discussion on the Farm Bill in Salinas on April 13, 2007.

(Photo: R. Tse, USDA/CDFA)

As always, thank you for your support. Feel free to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

A.G. Kawamura

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